Supply of news by foreign news agencies

2115. SHRI ALI ANWAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of news agencies are functioning to provide news to various agents of media;

(b) whether policy guidelines are in place to not permit foreign news agencies to directly give news to Indian newspapers and India news agencies have permission to give news to foreign news agencies;

(c) whether it is a fact that despite guidelines, many foreign news agencies are providing news directly to Indian newspapers and are doing business through various media houses; and

(d) if so, the number of various Indian and foreign news agencies functioning in the country and the subjects on which they are providing news to various newspapers/news sources?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) to (d) The operation of foreign news agencies in India is governed by the Cabinet Decision of 1956, according to which communication facilities can be granted only where the distribution of news within the country is to be effected through an Indian news agency, owned and managed by Indians, which would have full and final authority in the selection of foreign news for distribution and which would also be in a position to supply Indian news, in reasonable volume, to the foreign news agencies with whom they have a working arrangement. No specific case of contravention of the guidelines has been brought to the notice of the Ministry.

News Broadcast by FM Stations

2116. SHIR SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased do state:

(a) whether Government proposes to permit FM stations to broadcast news of short duration or otherwise; and

(b) if so, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) and (b) As per the Policy on expansion of FM Radio Broadcasting services through private agencies (Phase II), the private FM broadcasters are not permitted to carry news and current affairs.

Non adherence to bye-laws and procedures by Satyajit Ray Film Institute

2117. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that SATYAJIT RAY FILM INSTITUTE at Kolkata is not following the bye-laws and the procedure therefore and going on ad-hoc basis;

(b) what were the major lapses pointed out by C and AG in the recent inspection taken up; and

(c) what are the corrective measures taken up and the mechanism to avert recurrences?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) No, Sir

(b) The major lapses pointed out by C & AG relate to shortfalls in academic, administrative and accounts departments of the Institute.

(c) The CAG report had related to the year 2001-02 to 2005-06; since then major corrective measures have been taken up all the points noted by CAG. There has been substantial improvement in the systems and procedures including internal controls, gradual computerization of academic and administrative functions within the overall framework of the budget.

Revenue from DTH operators

2118. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is getting any regular revenue from the DTH operators;

(b) if so, what is the amount of revenue Government is getting; and

(c) whether those revenues include hardware cost and carriage fee collected from various TV channels?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government gets a share of 10% of Gross Revenue from the DTH licensees as reflected in the audited accounts of the company for that particular financial year. Gross Revenue as defined under Article-3 of the License agreement will include revenues received from hardware sales or rentals from subscribers and carriage fee, if any, collected from various TV channels.

Regulatory mechanism for broadcasting sector

2119. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a regulatory mechanism is proposed for broadcasting sector;

(b) if so, will it be ensured that freedom of expression as guaranteed in our Constitution is not compromised; and

(c) whether bodies like News Broadcasters Association are being consulted before any code of conduct is finalized?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI PRIYARANJAN DASMUNSI): (a) Yes, Sir. The proposed draft Broadcasting Services Regulation Bill has provisions for constitution in of Broadcasting Services Regulatory Authority.

(b) The proposed Bill does not compromise the freedom of expression as guaranteed in our Constitution.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government has been consulting stakeholders including News Broadcasters Association on the proposed Bill.